



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS

2 NAVY ANNEX

WASHINGTON DC 20370-5100

TJR

Docket No: 3440-99

15 November 1999



Dear [REDACTED]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of Title 10, United States Code, Section 1552.

A three-member panel of the Board for Correction of Naval Records, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 2 November 1999. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application, together with all material submitted in support thereof, your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations, and policies.

After careful and conscientious consideration of the entire record, the Board found the evidence submitted was insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice.

The Board found you enlisted in the Marine Corps on 11 February 1974 at the age of 19.

Your record shows that you on 4 February 1975 you were convicted by special court-martial (SPCM) of a 132 day period of unauthorized absence (UA). You were sentenced to confinement at hard labor for two months and forfeitures totalling \$200. Shortly thereafter, on 10 February 1975, you began a 189 day period of UA that was not terminated until you were apprehended on 19 August 1975. On 12 September 1975 you submitted a written request for an undesirable discharge for good of the service in order to avoid trial by court-martial for the foregoing period of UA. Your record shows that prior to submitting this request, you consulted with a qualified military lawyer at which time you were advised of your rights and warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. Subsequently, your request was granted and your commanding officer was directed to issue you an undesirable discharge by reason of the good of the service. As a result of this action, you were spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and the potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor. On 3 October 1975 you were so discharged.

The Board, in its review of your entire record and application considered all mitigating factors, such as your youth and immaturity, and your contentions that you would like your discharge upgraded for medical reasons, and that the Marine Corps refused to address your drug addiction. The Board further considered your contentions that your discharge is prohibiting your employment, trade, and educational possibilities. The Board also considered your drug rehabilitation certificate. However, the Board found the evidence and materials submitted were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge given the seriousness of your lengthy periods of UA and your request for discharge to avoid trial. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request for discharge to avoid trial by court-martial was approved since, by this action, you escaped the possibility of confinement at hard labor and a punitive discharge. Further, the Board concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain with the Marine Corps when your request for discharge was granted and you should not be permitted to change it now. Given all the circumstances of your case the Board concluded your discharge was proper as issued and no change is warranted. Accordingly, your application has been denied.

The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request.

It is regretted that the circumstances of your case are such that favorable action cannot be taken. You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new and material evidence or other matter not previously considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

W. DEAN PFEIFFER
Executive Director